

# RETA Files Appeal of AUC Decision on Heartland Transmission Project

## News Release

**(Sherwood Park)** December 30, 2011. Today, RETA officially filed an appeal of the AUC's decision to allow the construction of massive overhead power lines to run in Edmonton, Sherwood Park, Strathcona County and Sturgeon County. This project, the Heartland Transmission Project, has been consistently opposed by many stakeholders, including Strathcona County, the City of Edmonton, Sturgeon County, groups such as RETA who represent residents in all three communities, and industry groups who say the lines are not needed and will drive up electricity prices. RETA's appeal objects to the AUC decision on three key grounds:

1. The AUC accepted a chart which was presented by AltaLink which, in RETA's view, completely misrepresents the levels of Electromagnetic Fields (EMF) which would be experienced by area residents. The estimates measured only one frequency, and ignored the findings of Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers that:

“Since most electronic equipment is located at a low voltage level of its associated power distribution system, it is frequently exposed to the effects of voltage notching. Voltage notches frequently introduce frequencies, both harmonic and nonharmonic, that are much higher than normally exhibited in 5 kV and higher voltage distribution systems. These frequencies can be in the radio frequency (RF) range, and, as such, can introduce harmful effects associated with spurious RF.”

In other words, the chart used by the AUC to consider EMF levels in the surrounding area significantly underestimated resulting EMF levels.

2. The AUC quickly and arbitrarily dismissed the underground option as 'high risk'. However, undergrounding is becoming increasingly common throughout the world, and even the power companies involved agreed that undergrounding was feasible.

3. When considering the impact on the public of this project, the AUC didn't consider the fact that Colchester Elementary School will now have to close and move to a different location. It doesn't make sense to have the public pay to relocate the school, when putting the line underground would completely eliminate the need to relocate the school. As noted in the appeal, “If the cost analysis between overhead and underground lines included the costs to accommodate the students of Colchester School, this could lead the AUC to materially vary or rescind the Decision.”

We hope that the AUC will reconsider their decision in light of the errors it contained. A variety of other stakeholders have appealed or announced their intention to appeal the AUC's decision, including Strathcona County and the Alberta Landowners Council.